

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A mounting plate ~~as hereinbefore described~~ for a surface finishing machine, the mounting plate ~~including~~ comprising at least one vacuum port, a plurality of mounting areas proud of or raised above an intervening web and adapted to have mounted thereto surface finishing pads, and the mounting plate being adapted such that dust tends to progress into the proximity of the web and may therefrom be extracted through the vacuum port or vacuum ports by vacuum dust extraction means, the mounting plate further comprising a plurality of layers between an external surface upon which the mounting areas lie and a rear surface, and the plurality of layers including a first layer made of urethane and having the mounting areas and a second layer of resilient material.
2. (original) A mounting plate as in claim 1 wherein the vacuum port or at least one of the vacuum ports is within the web.
3. (original) A mounting plate as in claim 1 wherein the vacuum port or at least one of the vacuum ports is within a one of the mounting areas.
4. (original) A mounting plate as in claim 1 wherein the mounting areas are integral with the web.
5. (currently amended) A mounting plate as in claim 1 wherein the mounting areas are formed separately ~~[[to]]~~ from the web and are fitted thereto so that the mounting areas are proud of or raised above the web.
6. (cancelled)
7. (currently amended) A mounting plate as in claim 1 wherein the ~~centre~~ center of the mounting plate is part of the web.

8. (currently amended) A mounting plate as in claim 7 wherein the mounting areas are radially spaced about the ~~centre~~ center of the mounting plate.
9. (original) A mounting plate as in claim 8 including at least three mounting areas.
10. (original) A mounting plate as in claim 9 including four mounting areas.
- 11 - 17. (cancelled)
18. (currently amended) A mounting plate as in claim 1 wherein the vacuum port or at least one of the vacuum ports fits over a hollow cylindrical dust extraction peg, the dust extraction peg having an external circumferential groove, and the mounting plate including a thin backing plate with a peg aperture of diameter slightly smaller than the external diameter of the peg and adapted to receive the dust extraction peg, and the thickness and resiliency of the ~~backing~~ backing plate being such that the mounting plate may be pushed onto and pulled off the dust extraction peg and when secured relative to the dust extraction peg the backing plate resides within the groove.
19. (cancelled)
20. (cancelled)
21. (currently amended) A surface finishing machine as in claim ~~[[20]]~~ 32 wherein the mounting areas are formed separately ~~[[to]]~~ from the web and are fitted thereto so that the mounting areas are proud of or raised above the web.
22. (cancelled)
23. (currently amended) A surface finishing machine as is claim ~~[[22]]~~ 32 wherein said at least one vacuum port extends through the mounting plate to define a conduit

~~therethrough~~, the dust extraction means ~~includes~~ including at least one vacuum aperture adapted to align with ~~at least one a vacuum port conduit of the mounting plate~~, and vacuum connection means connecting the aperture to a vacuum source.

24. (cancelled)

25. (currently amended) A surface finishing machine as in claim 23 wherein the vacuum connection means includes at least one hollow cylindrical dust extraction peg, the dust extraction peg adapted to align with ~~at least one the vacuum port of the mounting plate conduit~~, the mounting plate including a thin backing plate with a peg aperture of diameter slightly smaller than the external diameter of the peg and adapted to receive the dust extraction peg, and the thickness and resiliency of the backing plate being such that the mounting plate may be pushed onto and pulled off the dust extraction peg and when secured relative to the dust extraction peg the backing plate resides within an external circumferential groove on the peg.

26. (currently amended) A surface finishing machine as in claim ~~[[20]]~~ 32 including a base plate connected to the random orbital drive means and adapted to receive the mounting plate.

27. (original) A surface finishing machine as in claim 25 wherein the at least one peg is attached to an intermediate disc onto which the mounting plate is fitted.

28. (currently amended) A surface finishing machine as in claim ~~[[27]]~~ 26 wherein the random orbital means includes at least one eccentrically driven weight, and the base plate is connected off ~~centre~~ center with respect to said weight to thereby result in a random orbital motion of the base plate.

29. (cancelled)

30. (currently amended) A surface finishing machine as in claim [[29]] 32 wherein the chassis also includes a flexible skirt extending from a lower edge of the chassis, the flexible skirt adapted to form a partial vacuum seal with a surface during operation.

31. (currently amended) A surface finishing machine as in claim [[30]] 32 wherein said at least one of the vacuum port[[s]] is a gap between the periphery of the ~~mounting~~ mounting plate and the chassis.

32. (new) A surface finishing machine comprising
a chassis,
a mounting plate,
random orbital drive means adapted to drive the mounting plate,
the chassis shrouding the mounting plate and having a downwardly open aperture for exposing the mounting plate to a surface to be finished,
the mounting plate having a plurality of layers between an external surface and a rear surface, the plurality of layers including a middle layer of a foamed resilient material, and an external layer and a rigid internal layer for connection with the drive means,
the machine further comprising:
at least one vacuum port communicating between the external surface and rear surface of the mounting plate, and
dust extraction means in communication with the vacuum port,
the external layer comprising a plurality of spaced mounting areas proud of or raised above an intervening web of an external surface of the external layer, said mounting areas being attached or attachable to surface finishing pads, such that in use dust tends to progress into the proximity of the web and is extracted therefrom through the vacuum port by the vacuum dust extraction means.

33. (new) A surface finishing machine as in claim 32 wherein the resilient layer of the mounting plate is made of a foamed rubber.

34. (new) A surface finishing machine as in claim 32 wherein the mounting plate is removable.

35. (new) A surface finishing machine as in claim 21 wherein the mounting areas include an abrasive or polishing surface fitted thereto.

36. (new) A mounting plate for a surface finishing machine, the mounting plate including at least one vacuum port extending therethrough,

the mounting plate having a plurality of layers between an external surface and a rear surface, the plurality of layers including a middle layer of a foamed resilient material, an external layer and a relatively rigid internal layer for connection with a drive means of the surface finishing machine,

the external layer comprising a plurality of spaced mounting areas being proud of or raised above an intervening web of an external surface of the external layer, said mounting areas being attached or attachable to surface finishing pads, so that in use dust tends to progress into the proximity of the web and may therefrom be extracted through the vacuum port.

37. (new) A mounting plate as in claim 36 wherein the mounting areas are integral with the web.

38. (new) A mounting plate as in claim 36 wherein the mounting areas are formed separately from the web and are fitted thereto so that the mounting areas are proud of or raised above the web.

39. (new) A mounting plate as in claim 36 wherein the mounting areas are radially spaced about a center of the mounting plate.

40. (new) A mounting plate as in claim 39 including at least three mounting areas.

41. (new) A mounting plate as in claim 39 including four mounting areas.
42. (new) A surface finishing machine as in claim 36 wherein the resilient layer for the mounting plate is a foamed rubber.
43. (new) A surface finishing machine as in claim 36 wherein the mounting areas include an abrasive or polishing surface fitted thereto.